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Visiting Washington for Cherry Blossoms?



This year's National Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C. will take place from March 20 to April 15, with peak blossoming

predicted to begin March 17.

If you or your family are planning to visit D.C. this spring or summer, my office can help you plan your trip! And while you are here, please stop by my office to visit my staff and me.

Click [here for my congressional guide to Washington, D.C., and to contact my office for tours and ticket information.](#)

Common Grounds with Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR)

This week I continued my tradition of hosting a Common Grounds breakfast with a Member of Congress across the aisle, and his or her staff. Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) represents the northwest corner of Oregon, and our districts share many characteristics: a combination of suburban and rural areas, an emphasis on agriculture, proximity to large bodies of water and more.

We have developed a friendship serving alongside one another on the Science, Space and Technology Committee, and I was pleased our staffs could enjoy some dedicated time to meet and build relationships. Building relationships among Members and staff across the aisle is key to solving the challenges we face today on behalf of the country and our constituents.



(Rep. Hultgren, Rep. Bonamici and their staffs in Rep. Hultgren's congressional office)

Receiving Public Service Award for Work on Infrastructure



(Rep. Hultgren delivers remarks to American Public Power Association)

This week I was honored to receive the American Public Power Association's 2018 Public Service Award and speak at their legislative breakfast in Washington, D.C.

From their announcement: "During his tenure in the House, Rep. Hultgren has been a staunch advocate for tax-exempt municipal bonds — that public power utilities primarily use to fund new infrastructure to improve their systems. In the last decade, public power utilities issued \$96 billion in municipal bonds to pay for investments that keep the lights on in millions of homes and business nationwide."

Illinois has 42 public power utilities, which provide electricity to nearly 270,000 homes and businesses.

Click [here to learn more about my work defending tax-exempt municipal finance](#).

Iranian Religious Minorities in Search of Safe Haven

Iranian religious minorities have faced terrible and systematic oppression by the Iranian government since 1979 through imprisonment, torture and executions, regardless of the faith (or no faith) of citizens. Minorities include ethnic Armenian Christians, Assyrian Christians, Mandeans and Zoroastrians, among others.

With no U.S. Embassy in Tehran, persecuted individuals are forced to flee to dangerous neighboring countries where conditions for asylum seekers are extremely unsafe and access to resettlement is uncertain. Religious minorities need a pathway of hope and protection from the oppressive Iranian regime.

The Lautenberg Amendment, which has been in effect since 1990, has preserved a safe and reliable mechanism for vulnerable religious minorities in the former Soviet Union and, more recently, Iran to escape harm's way through Austria, which has diplomatic relations with Iran. Traditionally, almost 100 percent of Iranian refugees have been resettled in the United States on the basis of the Lautenberg Amendment.

That's why the rejection of refugee status for 100 or so Iranian religious minorities last month was shocking, and makes little sense under the law.

My Co-Chair and I on the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission [have been working to help these religious minorities, and are seeking answers](#) from the Departments of Homeland Security and State.

The clock is ticking for the refugees. And without the safeguards provided by the Lautenberg Amendment, safe transit countries like Austria may no longer be willing to provide visas to allow religious minorities to be processed on their soil.

Read more:

- New York Times: [Spurned by U.S. and Facing Danger Back Home, Iranian Christians Fear the Worst](#)
- WORLD Magazine: [Broken faith](#)
- Free Beacon: [Iranian Christians, Other Religious Minorities, Turn to Austria for Help After U.S. Denies Asylum](#)

Remembering Billy Graham



On Wednesday, the late Reverend Billy Graham was the fourth civilian to lie in honor in the United States Capitol. Ahead of this

historic honor, I led a number of my colleagues in taking to the House floor to share our favorite memories and recognize the life and legacy of America's Pastor.

Click [here to read the statements delivered by my colleagues and me](#).

Click [here to watch our remarks on C-SPAN](#) (full hour begins at 5:19:33).

My Take On...

...President Trump's Opioid Summit

Since launching my Community Action Plan in 2014, and its update in 2017 (both available at <https://hultgren.house.gov/heroin>), our community has rallied to combat opioid and heroin abuse throughout northern Illinois.

I was encouraged to see President Trump hosting an Opioid Summit this week and proposing several of the recommendations from our report.

...President Trump's Proposed Tariffs on Steel, Other Goods

Manufacturers are a key employer and engine of economic growth in the 14th District, and I have fought to ensure they have the room they need to expand and hire more workers. It's why I was concerned to see President Trump proposing steel and aluminum tariffs on imports, especially when our economy is experiencing robust growth.

Free trade has helped this country to prosper, and protectionist policies like tariffs could set off trade wars with our partners and ultimately increase the price of products we produce here for American consumers. Our country creates the highest quality products in the world, and I would continue to put our manufacturers, farmers and businesses of all sizes up against our global competitors—without policies that undermine our domestic

success.

Further, our businesses and their employees are already experiencing great benefits from the passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act into law late last year. We should encourage, not hamper, the growth we're already seeing in higher wages and increased investments.

Save the Date: Veterans Resource Discussion

CONGRESSMAN RANDY HULTGREN INVITES VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES TO A **Veterans Resource Discussion**

FEATURING SPEAKERS FROM:

LOVELL FEDERAL HEALTH CARE CENTER

ILLINOIS DEPT. OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

LAKE COUNTY VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

McHENRY COUNTY VETERANS ASSISTANCE COMMISSION

TLS VETERANS

U.S. DEPT. OF VETERANS AFFAIRS CHICAGO OFFICE

WHEN: MONDAY, MARCH 12

3:00 P.M. – 4:30 P.M.

WHERE: McHENRY RECREATION CENTER

3636 MUNICIPAL DRIVE

McHENRY, IL 60050



HULTGREN.HOUSE.GOV

f t y /REPHULTGREN

If you haven't already, be sure to [like my Facebook page](#), follow me on Twitter ([@RepHultgren](#)), or [check out my YouTube page](#) to stay

informed on everything I'm doing on your behalf in Washington and in Illinois.

In Your Service,



Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress
14th District, Illinois

Randy in the News

- [Activists and Lawmakers Warn Iranian Christians Face 'Imminent Danger' if Returned Home](#) (CBN News)
- [Broken faith](#) (WORLD Magazine)
- [Rep. Randy Hultgren honored for protecting tax-exempt municipal bonds](#) (American Public Power Association)
- [Spurned by U.S. and Facing Danger Back Home, Iranian Christians Fear the Worst](#) (New York Times)
- ['The All-Encompassing Love of God': Lawmakers Preach the Gospel in Congress to Honor Billy Graham](#) (CBN News)



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